

# ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

## *Purpose of Checklist:*

The State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), Chapter 43.21 RCW, requires all governmental agencies to consider the environmental impacts of a proposal before making decisions. An environmental impact statement (EIS) must be prepared for all proposals with probable significant adverse impacts on the quality of the environment. The purpose of this checklist is to provide information to help you and the agency identify impacts from your proposal (and to reduce or avoid impacts from the proposal, if it can be done) and to help the agency decide whether an EIS is required.

## *Instructions for Applicants:*

This environmental checklist asks you to describe some basic information about your proposal. Governmental agencies use this checklist to determine whether the environmental impacts of your proposal are significant, requiring the preparation of an EIS. Answer the questions briefly, with the most precise information known, or give the best description you can.

You must answer each question accurately and carefully, to the best of your knowledge. In most cases, you should be able to answer the question from your own observations or project plans without the need to hire experts. If you really do not know the answer, or if a question does not apply to your proposal, write "do not know" or "does not apply". Complete answers to the questions now may avoid unnecessary delays later.

Some questions ask about governmental regulations, such as zoning, shoreline, and landmark designations. Answer these questions if you can. If you have problems, the governmental agencies can assist you.

The checklist questions apply to all parts of your proposal, even if you plan to do them over a period of time or on different parcels of land. Attach any additional information that will help describe the your proposal or its environmental effects. The agency to which you submit this checklist may ask you to explain your answers or to provide additional information reasonably related to determining if there may be significant adverse impact.

## *Use of checklist for nonproject proposals:*

Complete this checklist for nonproject proposals, even though questions may be answered "does not apply." IN ADDITION, complete the SUPPLEMENTAL SHEET FOR NONPROJECT ACTIONS (Part D).

For nonproject actions, the references in the checklist to the words "project," "applicant," and "property or site" should be read as "proposal," "proposer," and "affected geographic area," respectively.

## **A. BACKGROUND**

### 1. Name of proposed project, if applicable:

Kennedy Creek Natural Area Preserve (NAP) Estuary Viewing and Interpretive Site

### 2. Name of applicant:

Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

### 3. Address and phone number of applicant and contact person:

Contact Michele Zukerberg, Natural Areas Manager # (360) 790-9770  
1111 Washington St SE PO BOX 47C16 Olympia WA

### 4. Date checklist prepared:

December 7<sup>th</sup> 2006

### 5. Agency requesting checklist:

Washington DNR

### 6. Proposed timing or schedule (including phasing, if applicable):

The Estuary Viewing and Interpretive Site project is designed in three phases,

which are funding dependent. Funding is currently available to construct Phase 1 before July 1<sup>st</sup> 2007. Phase 1 can be constructed as a stand alone project and includes removing non-native vegetation, improving the existing trail to the site by adding a mix crushed rock and oyster shell and constructing additional trail around the site with three "nodes" or interpretive stations. Phase 2 includes construction of a three-tiered viewing area. Construction for this phase is planned for completion before July 2008 provided funding is available. Phase 3 is the design, manufacture and installation of up to five interpretive signs. Phase 3 is planned for completion before July 2009.

7. Do you have any plans for future additions, expansion, or further activity related to or connected with this proposal?  
If yes, explain.

No additions are planned beyond the three phases of the project described above.

8. List any environmental information you know about that has been prepared, or will be prepared, directly related to this proposal.

DNR Kennedy Creek NAP Management Plan, May 2006

9. Do you know whether applications are pending for governmental approvals of other proposals directly affecting the property covered by your proposal? If yes, explain.

No

10. List any government approvals or permits that will be needed for your proposal, if known.

Mason County Environmental Permit, JARPA- Shoreline exemption

11. Give brief, complete description of your proposal, including the proposed uses and the size of the project and site. There are several questions later in this checklist that ask you to describe certain aspects of your proposal. You do not need to repeat those answers on this page. (Lead agency may modify this form to include additional specific information on project description.)

The purpose of the project is to provide students and the general public with a place to view Kennedy Creek Natural Area Preserve (NAP) and learn about the important ecological and cultural features of the Oyster Bay estuary. The 300-acre NAP is located at the terminus of Totten Inlet, is part of the statewide system of natural areas and was designated to protect three high quality intertidal salt marsh ecosystems: 1) moderate-salinity high marsh, 2) silty, moderate-salinity, low marsh, and 3) silty, low-salinity, low marsh. The goals for the NAP were outlined in the 2005 Kennedy Creek NAP Management Plan and include using the natural features of the site as reference ecosystems for environmental education. The plan specifically identified the project area as an excellent location for establishing environmental education and salt marsh viewing.

A licensed landscape architect was contracted to design the project in three phases. The site is located on approximately 3/4 acre rock outcrop adjacent to Oyster Bay. The site is currently infested with non-native vegetation. Access to the site will be improved by modifying the existing trail and installing a hand rail down to the site. The trail will continue in a loop around the site guiding visitors up to a small three-tiered overlook area and down to three small interpretive stations or "nodes." All of the materials are to be placed upland, outside of the mean higher high water line. Logs will also be placed throughout the site to serve both aesthetic and functional purposes. The site will be planted with native plants. Interpretive panels describing the ecological and cultural features will be installed around the site.

12. Location of proposal. Give sufficient information for a person to understand the precise location of your proposed project, including a street address, if any, and section, township, and range, if known. If a proposal would occur over a range of area, provide the range or boundaries of the site(s). Provide a legal description, site plan, vicinity map, and topographical map, if reasonably available. While you should submit any plans required by the agency, you are not required to duplicate maps or detailed plans submitted with any applications related to this checklist.

The project site is located on a rock outcrop adjacent to the estuary of Oyster

Bay in Totten Inlet. It is in the S1/2 of Section 29 T19N R3W and can be reached by traveling northeast along Old Olympic Highway less than a ¼ mile past the intersection of Old Olympic Hwy. and Highway 101. Parking is along Old Olympic Hwy. at the second pullout. Ecology blocks currently mark the access to the trail down to the site.

## B. ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS

### 1. Earth

a. General description of the site (circle one): flat, rolling, hilly, steep slopes, mountains, other \_\_\_\_\_.

b. What is the steepest slope on the site (approximate percent slope)? 30%

c. What general types of soils (for example, clay, sand, gravel, peat, muck)? If you know the classification of agricultural soils, specify them and note any prime farmland.

Grove gravelly sandy loam, 5-15% slopes and Grove gravelly sandy loam 15-30% slopes.

d. Are there surface indications or history of unstable soils in the immediate vicinity? If so, describe.

No

e. Describe the purpose, type, and approximate quantities of any filling or grading proposed. Indicate source of fill. Non-native plant materials will be grubbed out of the site and the site prepared for planting and trail installation. Grading of an estimated 80 cubic yards is proposed for portions of the trail area down to and around the site, to lessen the slope, and for leveling areas for planting. An estimated 50 cubic yards of crushed rock and oyster shell mix will be placed on the trail. The interpretive viewing site has an area with a small depression, which will be filled with the soil from trail grading. If there is not enough fill from the grading, no more than 50 cubic yards of topsoil will be imported to the site from a local supplier.

f. Could erosion occur as a result of clearing, construction, or use? If so, generally describe.

Because of the site's proximity to the estuary, erosion control measures will be installed before any soil is disturbed. These measures are specified in the grading plans and include silt fencing and construction during the dry season.

g. About what percent of the site will be covered with impervious surfaces after project construction (for example, asphalt or buildings)?

The trail to and within the interpretive area will be comprised of a pervious surface material of crushed rock and oyster shells. The design includes three small nodes or interpretive sites along the loop trail and a three-tiered viewing platform that will be partially comprised of concrete, which will be impervious. This surface will cover no more than 5% of the total project area.

h. Proposed measures to reduce or control erosion, or other impacts to the earth, if any:

Erosion will be controlled by installing silt fencing surrounding the site during construction, use of mostly pervious materials, and limiting construction activities during the dry season only. In addition the trail and viewing platform will be cross sloped to disperse runoff-that may occur during heavy rains into adjacent vegetation.

### 2. Air

a. What types of emissions to the air would result from this proposal (i.e. dust, automobile, odors, industrial wood smoke) during construction and when the project is completed? If any, generally describe and give approximate quantities if known.

During construction there will be small amounts of emissions from trucks bringing materials to the site and off-road vehicles moving materials around the site.

After construction is completed, anticipated emissions are minimal amounts from cars and buses visiting the site

b. Are there any off-site sources of emissions or odor that may affect your proposal? If so, generally describe.  
None are known.

c. Proposed measures to reduce or control emissions or other impacts to air, if any:  
The site capacity is limited by parking which will reduce the amount of emissions from cars visiting the site.

### 3. Water

#### a. Surface:

1) Is there any surface water body on or in the immediate vicinity of the site (including year-round and seasonal streams, saltwater, lakes, ponds, wetlands)? If yes, describe type and provide names. If appropriate, state what stream or river it flows into.

The project site is located adjacent to Oyster Bay in Totten Inlet and near the outlet of Kennedy Creek.

2) Will the project require any work over, in, or adjacent to (within 200 feet) the described waters? If yes, please describe and attach available plans.

The project is within 200 feet of the shoreline and outside of the mean higher high water line.

3) Estimate the amount of fill and dredge material that would be placed in or removed from surface water or wetlands and indicate the area of the site that would be affected. Indicate the source of the fill material.

Does not apply.

4) Will the proposal require surface water withdrawals or diversions? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.

Does not apply.

5) Does the proposal lie within a 100 year floodplain? If so, note location on the site plan.

Does not apply.

6) Does the proposal involve any discharges of waste materials to surface waters? If so, describe the type of waste and anticipated volume of discharge.

Does not apply.

#### b. Ground:

1) Will groundwater be withdrawn, or will water be discharged to groundwater? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.

Does not apply.

2) Describe waste material that will be discharged into the ground from septic tanks or other sources, if any (for example: Domestic sewage; industrial, containing the following chemicals . . .; agricultural; etc.). Describe the general size of the system, the number such systems, the number of houses to be served ( if applicable), or the number animals or humans the system(s) are expected to serve.

Does not apply.

#### c. Water Runoff (including storm water):

1) Describe the source of runoff (including storm water) and method of collection and disposal, if any (include quantities if known). Where will this water flow? Will this water flow into other waters? If so, describe.

The current source of runoff is storm water flowing down the existing trail during very heavy rains which then disperses across the site. The current design will improve the trail conditions with cross sloping and will disperse water flow

into adjacent vegetation where runoff will be attenuated before reaching Oyster Bay.

2) Could waste material enter ground or surface waters? If so, generally describe.

In the long term, the site is limited to walk in only and far enough from the road that waste material entering surface water and reaching the site is not anticipated. During construction machinery will be checked to ensure there is no leaking of waste materials. The site will be surrounded by silt fencing to protect the estuary.

d. Proposed measures to reduce or control surface, ground, and runoff water impacts, if any:

The project is designed by a licensed landscape architect who has provided a grading plan to reduce runoff water impacts. These measures include improvements to the existing trail to the site by cross sloping promoting dispersed flow into vegetation around the site.

4. Plants

a. Check or circle types of vegetation found on the site:

- ☐ deciduous tree: alder, maple, aspen, other
- ☐ evergreen tree: fir, cedar, pine, other
- ☐ shrubs: ocean spray, rose, poison oak, snowberry
- ☐ grass
- ☐ pasture
- ☐ crop or grain
- ☐ wet soil plants: cattail, buttercup, bulrush, skunk cabbage, other
- ☐ water plants: water lily, eelgrass, milfoil, other
- ☐ other types of vegetation: saltgrass, pickleweed

b. What kind and amount of vegetation will be removed or altered?

Non-native Himalayan blackberry and scotch broom will be removed from the site. The site will be planted with native shrubs and herbaceous species from local seed sources.

c. List threatened or endangered species known to be on or near the site.

No threatened or endangered plant species have been found at or near the site. Kennedy Creek NAP was established to protect three intertidal salt marsh ecosystems listed as priorities under the Washington Natural Heritage Plan. The three ecosystems are: 1) moderate-salinity high marsh, 2) silty, moderate-salinity, low marsh, and 3) silty, low-salinity, low marsh. The general location of these high quality salt marsh ecosystems is on the main salt marsh between Kennedy and Schneider Creeks located across the bay from the project site.

d. Proposed landscaping, use of native plants, or other measures to preserve or enhance vegetation on the site, if any:

The site will be landscaped with native shrubs and herbaceous species of types that were identified occurring on or adjacent to the project site. The plants will be tolerant of dry exposed site conditions. These species include baldhip rose, red flowering currant, tall Oregon grape, snowberry, kinnikinnick, wild strawberry, bleeding-heart, and evergreen huckleberry.

5. Animals

a. Circle any birds and animals which have been observed on or near the site or are known to be on or near the site:

birds: hawk, heron, eagle, songbirds, other: waterfowl, shorebirds

mammals: deer, bear, elk, beaver, other: Douglas's squirrel, covote, harbor seal, northern raccoon, American mink, northern river otter

fish: bass, salmon, trout, herring, shellfish, other:

b. List any threatened or endangered species known to be on or near the site.

Kennedy Creek NAP provides habitat for four state or federally listed wildlife species; Bald Eagle, Marbled Murrelet, Peregrine Falcon, and Purple Martin. Bald Eagles use the site for foraging. They may be nesting in the vicinity of the preserve, but no nest sites have been identified on the preserve. Marbled Murrelets have not been sighted in the Kennedy Creek NAP area for many years. When they were observed it was during the winter non-breeding season and there are no confirmed breeding locations for Marbled Murrelet within 20 miles of Olympia, which includes the Kennedy Creek NAP. It is possible that they are still using the deeper waters of Totten Inlet to forage for fish during the winter months. Peregrine Falcons also use the site for foraging as non-breeders. Because Bald Eagles, Peregrine Falcons, and Marbled Murrelets do not use the NAP for nesting, there are no anticipated impacts from project development actions related to these species.

Purple Martins currently nest in the few pilings remaining in the mudflats. They have been observed nesting and foraging on the site for over 30 years and are predicted to leave when the pilings decay. There are also no anticipated impacts to these species from project activities.

c. Is the site part of a migration route? If so, explain.

Yes, the site is adjacent to Totten Inlet, which is an important site for wintering and migrant shorebirds, particularly Black-bellied Plovers, Dunlins, and Western Sandpipers.

d. Proposed measures to preserve or enhance wildlife, if any:

Site construction is planned for late spring and early summer. In consultation with Joe Buchanan, wildlife biologist with the Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, the migratory shorebirds are largely absent from the site. Observations on the site have occurred for over 25 years monitoring the migratory wildlife.

## 6. Energy and Natural Resources

a. What kinds of energy (electrical, natural gas, oil, wood stove, solar) will be used to meet the completed project's energy needs? Describe whether it will be used for heating, manufacturing, etc.

Does not apply.

b. Would your project affect the potential use of solar energy by adjacent properties? If so, generally describe.

Does not apply.

c. What kinds of energy conservation features are included in the plans of this proposal? List other proposed measures to reduce or control energy impacts, if any:

The completed project does not require the use of energy. The site is open to visitors during daylight hours.

## 7. Environmental Health

a. Are there any environmental health hazards, including exposure to toxic chemicals, risk of fire and explosion, spill, or hazardous waste that could occur as a result of this proposal? If so, describe.

Does not apply.

1) Describe any emergency services that might be required.

In the event that a visitor or worker is accidentally injured during construction, emergency response may be required, but this is not an anticipated issue at the site.

2) Propose measures to reduce or control environmental health hazards, if any:

Does not apply.

b. Noise

- 1) What types of noise exist in the area which may affect your project (for example: traffic, equipment, operation, other)?

There is moderate amount of traffic on Old Olympic Highway, but the site is far enough off the road that the traffic noise is not anticipated to have an impact.

- 2) What types and levels of noise would be created by or associated with the project on a short-term basis (for example: traffic, construction, operation, other)? Indicate what hours noise would come from the site.

There are no houses or other public facilities directly adjacent to the project site. The site will have noise associated with trail construction including bringing rock and concrete to the site, which will occur during business hours on weekdays. After the project is complete, the noise will be associated with visitors to the site.

- 3) Proposed measures to reduce or control noise impacts, if any:

Construction activities will occur during business hours on weekdays only.

## 8. Land and Shoreline Use

- a. What is the current use of the site and adjacent properties?

The site is part of the Kennedy Creek NAP. Currently the site is used for environmental education, shorebird monitoring, dispersed recreation and unfortunately unauthorized garbage dumping.

- b. Has the site been used for agriculture? If so, describe.

Does not apply.

- c. Describe any structures on the site.

There are no structures on the site.

- d. Will any structures be demolished? if so, what?

Does not apply.

- e. What is the current zoning classification of the site?

RR 5

- f. What is the current comprehensive plan designation of the site?

Rural

- g. If applicable, what is the current shoreline master program designation of the site?

Conservancy

- h. Has any part of the site been classified as an "environmentally sensitive" area? If so, specify.

Shoreline

- i. Approximately how many people would reside or work in the completed project?

Does not apply.

- j. Approximately how many people would the completed project displace?

Does not apply.

- k. Proposed measures to avoid or reduce displacement impacts, if any:

Does not apply.

- l. Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with existing and projected land uses and plans, if any:  
According to the Kennedy Creek NAP Management Plan, the NAP can be used for its educational value when consistent with conservation management and non-degrading to the natural features for which the NAP was designated. The specific project site was chosen because it is already disturbed and does not impact the primary salt marsh feature of the preserve. Following an action item designated in the

management plan, the site will be used primarily for environmental education. This proposal is compatible with existing and projected land uses.

#### 9. Housing

a. Approximately how many units would be provided, if any? Indicate whether high, middle or low-income housing.  
Does not apply.

b. Approximately how many units, if any, would be eliminated? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.  
Does not apply.

c. Proposed measures to reduce or control housing impacts, if any:  
Does not apply.

#### 10. Aesthetics

a. What is the tallest height of any proposed structure(s), not including antennas; what is the principal exterior building material(s) proposed?  
Does not apply.

b. What views in the immediate vicinity would be altered or obstructed?  
Does not apply.

c. Proposed measures to reduce or control aesthetic impacts, if any:  
Does not apply.

#### 11. Light and Glare

a. What kind of light or glare will the proposal produce? What time of day would it mainly occur?  
Does not apply.

b. Could light or glare from the finished project be a safety hazard or interfere with views?  
Does not apply.

c. What existing off-site sources of light or glare may affect your proposal?  
Does not apply.

d. Proposed measures to reduce or control light and glare impacts, if any:  
Does not apply.

#### 12. Recreation

a. What designated and informal recreation opportunities are in the immediate vicinity?  
Closer to the mouth of Kennedy Creek, the site is used extensively for fishing from October through November each year. Approximately 1.5 miles from the site is the Kennedy Creek Salmon Trail, which is open to visitors during November for viewing the returning salmon.

b. Would the proposed project displace any existing recreational uses? If so, describe.  
A few anglers use the site during the fishing season, but it is not the primary fishing location at Kennedy Creek. The site has been used as a vantage point for extensive shorebird monitoring and people visit the site for recreational bird watching. The proposal is designed to encourage bird watching. The public will be encouraged to remain on the designated trails and viewing areas and to use the site for viewing the estuary, shorebirds and salmon and for learning about the cultural uses and ecological features of the area. As a result, anglers will be discouraged from using the site to access the shoreline for fishing. Since the project area is not the main area for fishing access and does not provide easy access to the creek bed, we do not anticipate significant impacts to angler's access.

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts on recreation, including recreational opportunities to be provided by the project or applicant, if any:

The project provides recreational opportunities for the Kennedy Creek NAP. The site has been nominated for the Washington Audubon's Bird Trail Map for the Olympic Loop. By providing formal trails and interpretive areas we are encouraging the site to be used for environmental education by local schools, visitors interested in the estuary, and bird watchers.

### 13. Historic and Cultural Preservation

- a. Are there any places or objects listed on, or proposed for, national, state, or local preservation registers known to be on or next to the site? If so, generally describe.

DNR and the Squaxin Island Tribe recently completed a cultural resources survey of the Kennedy Creek NAP and no cultural or historic objects were identified on or next to the specific project site.

- b. Generally describe any landmarks or evidence of historic, archeological, scientific, or cultural importance known to be on or next to the site? If so, generally describe.

The land within and surrounding the Kennedy Creek NAP is known to be a historical cultural area and includes many cultural sites of the Squaxin Island Tribe. The estuary provided them with abundant resources including sacred sites, and the harvesting of roots, grasses, berries, fish and shellfish, medicinal plants, and game animals.

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts, if any:

Part of the interpretation at the site will describe historic and cultural uses in order to educate visitors about the many resources the estuary has provided humans over time.

### 14. Transportation

- a. Identify public streets and highways serving the site, and describe proposed access to the existing street system. Show on site plans if any.

The site is accessed by Old Olympic Highway. There is a small parking area for no more than five cars adjacent to the road.

- b. Is the site currently served by public transit? If not, what is the approximate distance to the nearest transit stop? The site is not currently served by public transit. The nearest transit stops are at Steamboat Island Rd. and Kamilche Trading Post, both approximately four miles from the site.

- c. How many parking spaces would the completed project have? How many would the project eliminate? The completed project makes use of the existing three to five parking spaces that are adjacent to Old Olympic Highway and would not eliminate any spaces. Buses bringing students to the site will be required to drop them off at the trail entrance, drive off site and return to pick them up. There is not enough room for parking both buses and cars at the site simultaneously.

- d. Will the proposal require any new roads or streets, or improvements to existing roads or streets, not including driveways? If so, generally describe (indicate whether public or private).

The proposal does not require any changes to existing roads. DNR would like to limit use of an additional pull out south of the parking and trail access area, along Old Olympic Highway. This pull out is frequently used for garbage dumping. Closing this area would also direct access to the project site along the designated trail and discourage visitors from taking shortcuts to the site. This pull out is predominantly within the Old Olympic Highway Right of Way and not within DNR managed lands, therefore any modifications would require an action by Mason County.

e. Will the project use (or occur in the immediate vicinity of) water, rail, or air transportation? If so, generally describe.

Does not apply.

f. How many vehicular trips per day would be generated by the completed project? If known, indicate when peak volumes would occur.

Three to twenty vehicles are expected to visit the site per day depending on the day and the time of year, with an increase occurring when shorebirds are abundant and during the return of the salmon.

g. Proposed measures to reduce or control transportation impacts, if any:

DNR is in communication with Mason County regarding installation of signs along Old Olympic Hwy to indicate a scenic attraction, and to discuss options to close the existing pull out used predominantly for garbage dumping.

#### 15. Public Services

a. Would the project result in an increased need for public services (for example: fire protection, police protection, health care, schools, other)? If so, generally describe.

No increased needs are anticipated. The project has been designed with minimal structures and the materials are low maintenance in order to reduce issues related to vandalism and theft.

b. Proposed measures to reduce or control direct impacts on public services, if any.

Does not apply.

#### 16. Utilities

a. Circle utilities currently available at the site: electricity, natural gas, water, refuse service, telephone, sanitary sewer, septic system, other.

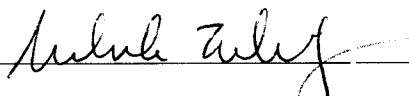
Does not apply.

b. Describe the utilities that are proposed for the project, the utility providing the service, and the general construction activities on the site or in the immediate vicinity which might be needed.

No utilities are proposed for the project.

#### C. SIGNATURE

The above answers are true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that the lead agency is relying on them to make its decision.

Signature: 

Title: Natural Areas Manager, SPS Region

Date: 12-7-06

a:\checklist&supp 1/26/99